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Washington Merry-Go-Round

by JACK ANDERSON

WASHINGTON — The White House has been warned that the sniper attack on police and firemen in New Orleans last weekend could precipitate a similar incident in Washington during President Nixon's inaugural.

The Secret Service is deeply concerned over the mentality of terrorists who are willing to lay down their lives in a fanatical outburst of hatred.

From atop a New Orleans hotel, Mark James Robert Essex blasted away at police for almost 12 hours and then laughed as a hail of police bullets finally cut him down. He reportedly had ties with black fanatics who avow the politics of hatred and violence.

Secret Service files are loaded with references to these extremists who might be willing to die in a blaze of fury against the white establishment. The files tell of their secret plottings and threatenings against local police and Washington notables alike, including the President.

Essex, a 23-year-old Navy veteran discharged "for unsuitable character and behavior disorders," reportedly mingled with extremists who have sought to stir up a black hotbed in New Orleans.

The Secret Service field office in New Orleans has described their activities in secret intelligence summaries. One of the most militant black organizations, according to these intelligence reports, is the Republic of New Africa (RNA) which seeks "the establishment of a separate black nation within U.S."

It was founded by the radical black supremist, Robert Williams, who has made political pilgrimages to Cuba and China. But a faction, more interested in action than ideology, has made its "national headquarters" in New Orleans. The field office describes this as the "Richard Henry faction," with eight "hardcore members" and a hangout on Fern Street.

Secret Service files charge that RNA radicals have participated "in target practice-explosives training," have "cached weapons and explosives," are involved "in sabotage and guerrilla warfare activities," have advocated "an apparent use of armed robbery-extortion as means of raising money," are implicated "in assassination plot against local officials and reportedly mentioned the President in their discussions."

Another militant black group, which calls itself the New Orleans Urban Guerrilla Group, "advocates overthrow of the U.S. government" and "has been stockpiling weapons." It has set up headquarters, according to the field office, on Jackson Avenue in New Orleans.

Still another group, which formed in New Orleans as the National Committee to Combat Fascism but changed its name to the Black Panther Party, has two hangouts — one on Rocheblave Street, the other on Magazine Street. "Sources report these locations have been fortified," warns the field office. "Members are known to have purchased rifles and ammunition within past several months."

The Deacons of Defense and Justice, which is described as a "small, militant all-Negro organization to aid in the defense of civil rights workers and Negroes in the South," was founded in the Jonesboro, La., area. Secret Service files say it has been "increasingly identified as a group of Negro militants."

And the Maitreyan Temple, a pseudo-religious black group in New Orleans, "has access to 200 lbs. of C-4 (plastic) explosives," reports the field office.

The Secret Service has files, of course, on several other fanatical black organizations outside of Louisiana. Their members too, are capable of a suicidal attack upon the inaugural celebrants, say our Secret Service sources.

The Black Panther Party's David Hillard, for example, told an antiwar rally in San Francisco: "We will kill Richard Nixon." The Justice Department dropped the charges against him, however, rather than reveal wiretap evidence in court.

In Miami, the Black Afro Militant Movement is armed to the teeth and eager for revolution. Say the Secret Service files: "Each member owns at least two weapons and is trained to service and operate various other weapons."

In Cleveland, the Afro Set preaches "hatred of white people and the takeover of all operations in the black community by black people." The Secret Service files also note that "members receive training in use of weapons, karate and guerrilla tactics."

These entries are typical of the information in Secret Service files about the growing black militant movement. Some are already waging low-grade guerrilla warfare against the police. The Secret Service is worried that they may attempt a spectacular incident in Washington during the Inaugural.

As a precaution, the Secret Service is bringing in an additional 600 agents to augment its 1,200-man force throughout the Inaugural. Some 10,000 local police officials from all over the country will also assist in policing the event, say our sources. But officially, the Secret Service had "no comment."